



Connecticut Roundtable on Climate and Jobs

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Testimony in Support of HB 6851

An Act Implementing Recommendations of the Hydrogen Task Force

To: Honored Chairs Sen. Needleman and Rep. Steinberg, Vice Chairs Sen. McCrory and Rep. Foster, Ranking Members Sen. Fazio and Rep. Buckbee, and Distinguished Members of the Energy and Technology Committee

From: Connecticut Roundtable on Climate and Jobs

On behalf of the Connecticut Roundtable on Climate and Jobs, thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of HB 6851, An Act Implementing Recommendations of the Hydrogen Task Force.

The Connecticut Roundtable on Climate and Jobs builds alliances among diverse constituencies to combat climate change, create jobs and promote racial, economic, and climate justice. The Roundtable seeks to build a worker-oriented environmental movement committed to securing a fair and just transition that protects both the environment and the livelihoods of workers and their communities.

Hydrogen produced with clean energy is an important tool for climate change mitigation. It can help reduce emissions in sectors where electrification is not feasible or practical, such as marine shipping, ports, and aviation. CRCJ strongly supports the focus of HB 6851 on clean hydrogen and its application for the hardest-to-decarbonize end uses.

HB 6851 could be strengthened with additional specificity regarding appropriate end uses for clean hydrogen and how clean hydrogen is defined. While we have no issue leaving the full definition of clean hydrogen up to DEEP to develop, the bill language should specify that “clean hydrogen” does not include hydrogen produced or blended with fossil fuels. Further, we believe that clean hydrogen development should be restricted to, not just prioritized for, hard-to-decarbonize end uses where electrification is not a viable option.

In addition to identifying appropriate end uses and cost differentials, a clean hydrogen strategic plan should also consider where the hydrogen is produced, how it will be transported to appropriate end uses, and whether the production and distribution will impact environmental justice communities already overburdened by energy infrastructure. The report should also compare combustion and electrolysis of clean hydrogen. Public investments should prioritize the lowest-emissions technology. Technology pathways should be evaluated for greenhouse gas reduction effectiveness, market cost, and social cost including health, safety, waste disposal, pollution, safety, and employment.

CRCJ strongly supports applying the same labor standards that exist for other clean energy technologies under section 31-53d(a) of the general statutes to clean hydrogen to ensure worker and host community benefits and to promote a level playing field.

Finally, we must be careful not to delay alternative climate action awaiting the commercialization of clean hydrogen. Thank you for your consideration of this bill.

Sincerely,

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